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ABSTRACT

Participants in an adult education grade 11 English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) writing class, all immigrants to Canada with varying cultural backgrounds, wrote journal entries in response to the theme "growing up different." The project involved individual writing, word processing, peer editing, computer graphics, audiotape recording of completed essays, and creation of a bound book. A description of the project, drawing on recent research in ESL instruction, is presented and the ten resulting essays are included. The stories, which comprise over half of the document, reflect widely varying background experiences, and some similarities in experiences after immigrating. Contains 15 references. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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ED 419 427

GROWING UP DIFFERENT

(ADULT STUDENT ESL JOURNALS)

BY THE STUDENTS OF JANE FRASER

THE ADULT LEARNING CENTRE

EAST YORK BOARD OF EDUCATION

DRYSDALE AWARD WINNER

FL 801 220

JANE FRASER

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ABSTRACT

Response journals are an effective strategy for crossing cultural barriers since students all have something to report on family and social values. This research reports on similar research, in learning writing skills by a multicultural, English as a Second Language classes. The theme for student response was Growing Up Different, for which the students prepared a booklet of essays on the word processor, recorded audio tapes of the essays, and signed personal photographs with graphic borders. Collegial methodology and small group learning strategies were employed with ooutcomes of successful achievement for all students, in both cognitive and affective domains.

GROWING UP DIFFERENT

Participants in the English as a Second Language Grade 11 Writing adult class were taught by a teacher researcher. Since their arrival in Canada, they had completed Grades 9 and 10 English as a Second Language and computer courses in Keyboarding, Introduction to Computers and DBase IV, so they were able to incorporate technologocial skills with language acquisition. Moodley (1995) places this study within the structure of the School System: Multiculturalism in Ontario reflects the Canadian national policy of "cultural and linguistic pluralism" with provinicially controlled "ethnocultural support-service orientation".

In this project, students were writing in response to the theme "Growing Up Different", which "crosses cultural boundaries", (Margerison, 1994), "builds student strengths" and "makes all students feel included", (Tiedt & Tiedt, 1995). Students wrote individual perspectives of their personal history and aspirations for their children, in accordance with ideas of Moulton & Holmes (1994), whose students "counteracted their feelings of isolation" with "ideas initiated by themselves".

The teacher researcher became facilitator in choosing not to edit students' expression in order to "create a classroom community" (Lesmire, 1994) of acceptance, "to affirm the rights of all members to be different" and "to emphasize their responsibilities to respect differences (Hergert & Others, 1995).

The students "imported a multiculturalism approach to writing style (Lu, 1994) and peer corrected errors, in their own "dynamics of

cross-cultural interaction" (Weaver, 1995). They appointed a group leader with computer graphics skills to from their autographed photographs; then they completed their final writing drafts in the word processing lab; and finally they made audiotape recordings of each students reading the completed essays. Then, the students appointed another group leader with excellent organizational skills to compile the multimedia project for binding.

Researchers comment on journal writing, method, student experience and values. Lay (1995) describes ESL response journals as "windows of the world....to help the diverse student population learn each other's cultures as they share journal entries in a multidirectional and active learning process". Lindeman (Nixon-Ponder, 1995) suggested that "curriculum should focus on method instead of content....relying on the adult learner's experience". Padilla and Lindholm (1995) state "New scholarship on ethnic minorities calls for a paradigm shift from the Eurocentric approach to an approach that values each ethnic group for its own sake".

Comparing the androgeny of the teacher /researcher/ facilitator to studies of Mehan, a researcher recognizes "collaborative teaching methods, inquiry approaches and writing-to-learn techniques" (1992) as "components for successful research on cultural diversity and second language learning"(1994). Mehan poses the problem "classroom discourse is a crucial component of school culture, but an unfamiliar one to students from linguistic and ethnic minority backgrounds" (1994) and suggests the two-fold solution of using "students' knowledge as a resource" and "creating a student-centered classroom" (1995).

Discussing factors contributing to success of the project, the researcher suggests developing relevant curriculum with practical application for language acquisition and acculturation, determining the level of students' current performance, giving positive reinforcement of student behaviour, encouraging students' collegial interaction, permitting group selection of project leaders, creating of classroom climate of trust and respect, and incorporating technological skills in writing.

In conclusion, each educator of multicultural adult students should think globally and act locally. UNESCO in 1992 describes "global issues of cultural diversity"; and "values of peace, tolerance and democracy"; and "a world wide code of ethics" as "strategies for strengthening humanistic, cultural and international values in formal and non-formal education". This teacher/researcher / facilitator, recognizing the international demographics of her class, said, on the final day of the course, "I do not have to travel, the whole world came to me."

APPENDIX

Valarmathy: FROM SRI LANKA via ETHIOPIA, NIGERIA, INDIA AND ENGLAND
Hindu wedding while a student with teachers present

Padmini: FROM SRI LANKA
Returned to ALC for more advanced courses

Vasinthini: FROM SRI LANKA
Returned to ALC for more advanced courses

Yamuna: FROM SRI LANKA
Graduate nurse

Elzbieta: FROM POLAND via ITALY
University graduate
Moved to another city where husband now works

Laurentiu: FROM RUMANIA
Masters Degree in Agriculture
Now employed by Parks Department

Parasakthi: FROM SRI LANKA via ZAMBIA
Class co-leader of project
Now has immigrated to Australia

Nashila: FROM TANZANIA
Class co-leader of project
Now employed by Head Office of a Bank

Sabina: FROM RUMANIA
Masters Degree in Economics

Micheline: From HAITI
Now employed as gourmet chef

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM SRI LANKA via ETHIOPIA, NIGERIA, INDIA AND ENGLAND

My name is Valarmathy. I born in Sri Lanka. First I went to Ethiopia. I was studying in Ethiopia in Asmara. I studied grade one to five. The weather was too hot, and there was rain too. I and my family was in Asmara for 5 years and around my house there was 25 houses and a hill. At the top of the hill there was a military army camp. They always start fighting from 7.30 P.M to 5 A.M. My father never allow us after 6:30P.M. out of the house. There was a village and we always used to climb the hill to get water.

We had four birds in the house. When we leave we always let them out. In Ethiopia there was a temple. Behind the temple there was a large garden. I and my brother and sisters and our friends go and climb on the apple trees and eat apples . In the garden, there was all kind of vegetables and fruits too. Now they don't have food, water, dress, or medical facilities. I and my family always talk about Ethiopia. If we think of going to Ethiopia again, we might not come back and we might stay there until we die. Ethiopia is good country. In Ethiopia we have our own house. In Ethiopia the food is different and the weather is different too. I and my family took a flight to Nigeria. When I was studying in Nigeria in Lagos. I studying up to grade five to seven.

Nigeria is good country. Nigeria is too hot and it will rain too. The weather is too good. There was a vegetable garden we used go there and pick up some vegetable. My father used to work as a teacher in a college so we always used to go there and have some fun. We have many friends in

Nigeria. The are very helpful.

I , my brother, and my sister went to India. We left my sister in India. I and my brother went to Sri Lanka. Then my mother and my other sister came to Sri Lanka. On 1984 february, my mother left my sister in the hostel for 3 years. My mother left me and my brother in the hostel for 1 year. I studied up to grade to 9. Then we all came back to India. Then we stayed there for 1 year and I studied up to grade 10. In Canada the weather is different and food is different too. In Canada, there is different kind of computers available. In Canada everyday the weather is changing. I love this type of country. I am studying in Adult Learning Centre in Victoria Park and Danforth. I am in grade 11. I am studying English, Data Processing and typing. Canada is a good country and there is a lot of freedom for people. Which we don't have in our own country.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM SRI LANKA

Of course! Even I can remembering my past ages from 5-16 years old. My mother sent me to kindergarten when I was five years old. My mother worked as a Needle-work teacher until she got married. Then she resigned that job because she was ready to devote her life to her kids. My father is doing his own business. Our parents have own big house and many acres of land. Our parents are wealthy people; so my mum spent her leisure time with us. My father also so kind with us. My father, who got a free time, he spent with us. Really it was a "golden time" in my whole life.

But, when we separeted by time, we flew to foreign countries; because we were discreminated and affected by the Sri Lankan Government; just for the racial reason. Now, we are beginners in this land; we don't have own house. Either don't have a good job. So we both (husband and wife) got have to work. We couldn't devote or spend our

time with our kid. We let him to the daycare, even he is too small. We don't have enough time to feed him, to play with him, or talk to him. This situation make a big gap between us and the kid. In this time our kid is turning to the other kind of life.

In the other hand, we never get a chance to go through easily in computers, as in Canada. Our kid is going to get a good chance to familiar with computers even he is too small. We couldn't imagine when he is getting in our age, he would have good experience in computer. May be he would be an expert in computer' world.

When I was a kid, I didn't used to wear bootes or gloves; because my country is so warm. I never seen snow until I settled down in foreign countries. But my son-in-law who knows the snow and he loves to play in snow.

In my childhood rarely, I took my foods outside. But my son-in-law frequently takes his food outside. My son-in-law, who knows to operate many kind electrical goods; but I don't. Because Canada is developed in science than in my country.

PS: I am Padmini who came to Canada on 28th of December 1986. Still I'm single; but my brother got married. My brother got boy, whose name is Regan. My son-in-law used to go to daycare. The above article is comparing between with my childhood and my son's-in-law childhood.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM SRI LANKA

Growing means who is developing in variable ways. E.g: When the child getting older, his knowldge also growing up. Usually the child's knowledge develop too, when the body is growing up. The growing contains many hoods: child hood, youth hood, and old hood. All hoods have

many defferents in growing up. The growing depends on time, place, weather, economic, and lookafter.

The child hood is very nice. The child has very interesting to learn about everythings, who observe carefully elder's behaviour. When I was child there weren't television, telephone or electric goods. But science had developed very well now. So, the children are clever than our childhood. Economic is very important in growing of child. E.g: If the parents are in good economic situation, who can give good foods, electric playing goods, and everying things to theri child. In Africa, there is not good Economic. So, there children are affected by stravation. As they have no food, who will be growing as healthy children than developed Countrie's children. Weather also influence in growing of children.

In our country, we start to go to school in Five years old. But, here so many parents let their child in a month baby too. This is too difficult to our country people. In my opinion: in my country, parents spend most time with their lovely children. There is no day-care, usually women doesn't go to work. But, in foreign countrie's parents don't spend most time with their children. so, I think this life is like a machine type.

Add: My name is Vasanthini. I came from Srilanka to Canada on 18th of May in 1988. Canada is a peaceful country than my country. Therefore I came here. I like Canada and Canadians too. Canadian government help to us. I am a single now, but I can realize the differents of growing up between Srilanka and Canada.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM SRI LANKA (Graduate nurse)

My name is Yamuna.I was born in Colombo. My mother language is Tamil. I studied there. When I was in school I was very friendly with my

friends. After my father died by heart attack, we moved to Jaffna. After I studied in Victoria College. There also I was friendly with my friends. My teachers gave pets. I was very happy. I participated in P.T. competition in every year.

I was studied very well. I pass the G.C.E. O/L and advanced level. It is evaluated grade 13. After I studied keyboard. I joined Nurses Training College in 1982 to 1985. When I finished my training, I worked in Colombo gout hospital. Sinhala is a our country first language. I know that language. Therefore I worked very well. First I worked in Orthopaedic theatre. After I worked in Surgical word. That have General surgical patients and orthopaedic patients also.

I came to Canada. I studied keyboard. I got higher marks. I studied English. Weather is very change to me, but I like too much.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM POLAND via ITALY--
University grad

Every generation grow up differently. Always, there are differencies between parents and children, because every generation life in different time, different place and different situation.

All this things influence and define, how is their life like. My parents were young during the Second World War. They have their six best years canceled from the life. My father was taken to Germany, where he worked as a slave in German's industry. Because of this situation, my

parents could not reallize their life's plans.

I was born 7 years after the war was finished. Poland was destroyed but people were happy. They worked for themselves in a free country.

My childhood was happy. I have a good family. My mother is exceptional woman. She had never worked, so she could take care of children. I was not get up early in the morning to go to the kindergarten, like my son later on. I played with my parents, sisters and friends. I did not have so many toys, I played with toys which were made by myself. Most of my vacations I have spent in summer camps with children from all parts of Poland. I did not have any problems in school. However, in my school there was iron discipline (children could not do what they wanted) and high level of education. Everyday we had a lot of lessons to do at home, so we had to divide wisely our time between lessons and amusement. There was not TV in Poland at that time, the cinemas were occupied by young people. We spent all our savings there.

Now I am looking backwards, I think, that my childhood and youth were the best time of my life.

The years went by. I finished high school and University. In 1978 I got married. Two years later my son was born.

He had the first three years terrible. I hope he does not remember it. My husband worked and studied at Politechnical University. I had to go to work too, because his salary was not enough for our family.

Generally, I worked in the evenings and in the nights. I spent days with child, my husband -- evenings, but three days a week he studied at University, so my sister or our friend took care of him at that time.

When he started to go to the kndergarten his life become like other Polish children. As an only child he had everything we could afford. He had a lot of toys, he traveled a lot with us. We decide to emigrate when he was seven years old. In Italy, he started his education directly from the third grade. This school was completly different than my. Children were free to do what they wanted to do. The teacher could not do anything if their behave was not correct.

My son saw almost all parts of Italy. He could see everything I was able to see only in books. We visited Venice, Florence, Naples, Sorento, Pompeii, and, of course, Rome. We lived in Rome for almost 2 years, so he knows Rome better than Warsaw.

In Italy he was especially intreasted in the history of ancient Rome. He learn a lot about italian culture from children he played with, and from his teachers at school.

Now we are in Canada. My son started his Canadian school. He has new friends, he learn to live with people which came to Canada from all over the world.

Like many other children, he likes to play games, footbal, to watch TV. Sometimes, I have to limit watching TV because I dont like all the movies for children. There is too much violence.

Comparatively to my childhood my son's childhood is more intreasting, intensive, and wealthy. At age of nine, he speaks three languages, he came into contact with two culture: Italian and Canadian, he make friendship with many people from all over the world. I think, he is

more open-minded that I when I was in his age. In such country like Canada, he has opportunity to do what he wants. I hope he could to make the most of his freedom.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM RUMANIA Masters Degree in Agriculture--now employed by Parks Department

Generation gap! Everyone is talking about that. Could everyone explain or understand the meaning of the causes of this everlast life true?

The grown-ups are used to say, "In my time..this and that were so or we did so and that," very different, of course, of what we doing or thinking the nowadays young people.

But the young people don't care about the older people have done in their youth.

Every generation has right to build own way of life, his own way of thinking about what is right or wrong, about what is good or bad, about what is moral or not.

The major aspects of life changed, than changed also the way of thinking about life.

No more so many decease, no more running for food; the new are very fast spread all over the world, the good and bad news are instantly to everyone, the peoples reaches more and more nature, to an active free and healthier life.

Different life conditions means growing up different for the young people and to every of us.

Life changes continuously.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM SRI LANKA via ZAMBIA
Class co-leader of project--now has immigrated to Australia

It is a lot different between me and my children. In talking, in behaving even in eating. We speak different languages too. I was brought up in Sri Lanka and I speak Tamil. We left Sri Lanka in 1979. After that I lived in Zambia for 8 years and I came to Canada in June 1987. From kindergarten my children studied in English and they can't speak my language. We speak different languages at home. Sometimes its hard to communicate with each other. I am a Hindu. My children know only Christianity.

I was brought up in a more polite and more caring society, but they are not. I used to look after even next door children. My kids don't know who the next door neighbour is. I shared things with others. My kids play with toy and they watch T.V. most of the time. Its hard for them to share with other. I lived with my grand parents and they loved me as much as my parents did. There is no chance for my children to know much about their grand parents.

When I was a student the teachers took an important part in every student's future, not only they had every right to discipline the student they even punished them. So, it is difficult for parents because the relationship between the student and the teacher is very different.

But we have to remember that there is always difference between each generation. Though there is not much difference between me and my parents, my mother told me almost the same story.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM TANZANIA
Class co-leader of project-now employed by Bank Head Office

My name is Nashila, I have got a kid who is five years old, and we

are originally coming from S. Africa, the country name is Tanzania. We arrived here in Canada six months ago. My kid is experiencing a very different way of life over here. The life was very different in the country we are coming from. It was to slow in everyway. I myself used to be at home for the full day, and my kid goes to school only in the morning, and after school, he allways used to be with me, if not with me, then he used to be with any of our family member, so he used to have the family surroundings.

But here it's different. The school is different, and the school activities are also different. For example, here they have computers in school, but there, they dont have anything like computers, they have not even heard about them. And after school he goes to the daycare, instead of coming home; so we don't see each other till in the evening. Even food wise it's different, there we get everything which is fresh, but here we get everything which is frozen. Even the climate is different; we have snow, and a cool weather, but over there, we have a very stable climate, which is not too hot or too cold. The disease called malaria is very common over there, so I have to protect my kid by giving him medicine with which he doesn't feel very healthy; but here they are no problems like we used to have them over there.

My kid really enjoyes over here, because he has so many friends from the different culture, and he enjoying being with his friends. And when he is at home, he loves looking at the T.V. programs, which we don't have them over there; like sesamee street which is very educational for the kids, from all this sort of programs he gets different ideas in his mind, and they get matured very fast compare to their age.

But still I love staying in Tanzania; because at least, I could be with my kid, and I should be able to look after him. Even though we don't have all the facilities which we are having them over here, and I can't expect because it's a third world country, and it's a very poor country.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM RUMANIA
Masters Degree-Economics

My name is Sabina. I was born is Rumania, Europe.

Growing up different... of course, there are long difference between the children growing in the same country, how about thousands and thousands kilometers which separate our countries. I was born in intellectual family. My father was an engineer and my mother was an economist. I had a very happy childhood without worries and problems. As a child, I learned foreign language and to play piano.

Rumania used to be a very rich country and that's why a lot of immigrants were coming in the country around 1900. Then in 1944 after the second world war the communist took over the power, and things began to change little by little.

But at the beginning of the communist reign the life wasn't so bad like it is now. After ceausescu, despotic regime was taking the power the things in our country were changed. But still my family offered my the possibility to learn and to go to University, and I became an economist like my mother.

But what for these things? You could do a lot of things there but you are not allowed to. Sometimes it doesn't matter how you grew up when a black sponge, which is the communism whipped everything and leave you empty of ideas and wishes. Now, living in Canada, I see the life different. You can live here without fear.

Here I got married and now I am happy that my first child will be born in Canadian soil in March.

So, in that way I can tell you in a couple of years how my child will grow up different from me in freedom and light.

ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENT FROM HAITI (Now a gourmet chef)

Growing Up Different for me means I entirely grew up differently than the way most Canadians grew up. When I was growing up, I was situated in a dissimilar culture. My culture expects children to show respect and discipline. Children here seem more disrespectful. Since I was a Haitian brought up, my experience is very different to that of huge urban city like Toronto. I cam from a small island where, our school system and manners, as compared to Canadians and others societies, was similar and less hectic.

Therefore, the things that I learned in Haiti are not always useful in Canada. My honesty and loyalty were taught to me by my family and reinforced by my schooling. I remember when I used to go to school in Haiti how brusque and rough the teachers used to be. They used to strap, beat and scold pupils. I my parents did not send me to school; or if I did not bring notebooks, pens or pencils; I would be sent back home. Here in Canada, school children cannot be beaten. Other methods of discipline are used. Also, supplies are supplied ofter by the school in the lower grades.

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